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In the Claims

1. (Cancelled.)
2. (Cancelled.)
3. (Cancelled.)
4. (Cancelled.)
5. (Cancelled.)
6. (Cancelled.)
7. (Cancelled.)
8. (Cancelled.)
9. (Cancelled.)
10. (Cancelled.)
11. (Cancelled.)
12. (Cancelled.)
13. (Cancelled.)
14. (Cancelled.)
15. (Cancelled.)
16. (Cancelled.)
17. (Cancelled.)
18. (Cancelled.)

19. (Currently amended.) In a A method for of performing a completion or workover operation of an oil or gas well using a thickened brine in order to alleviate fluid loss into the thickening a brine during the recovery of oil and/or gas from a subterranean formation, the improvement comprising which comprises introducing into the well to the a brine to be thickened with a suspension comprising a cellulosic polymer suspended in an aqueous salt solution, wherein the aqueous salt solution contains 40 weight percent or more of alkali formate and further wherein no more than 25% of the alkali formate is sodium formate, the remainder being potassium formate, cesium formate or a mixture thereof.

20. (Cancelled.)
21. (Cancelled.)
22. (Cancelled.)

23. (Currently amended.) The ~~suspension method~~ of Claim 22 19, where the cellulosic polymer is crosslinked with glyoxal.
24. (Cancelled.)
25. (Currently amended.) The method of Claim 19, wherein the brine brine, prior to being thickened with the suspension, has a density greater than 11.6 ppg.
26. (Currently amended.) The method of Claim 25, wherein the brine brine, prior to being thickened with the suspension, has a density between from 11.6 to 14.2 ppg.
27. (Previously presented.) The method of Claim 19, wherein the cellulosic polymer is selected from the group consisting of anionic and nonionic modified cellulose.
28. (Previously presented.) The method of Claim 27, wherein the anionic or nonionic modified cellulose is selected from the group consisting of hydroxyethylcellulose and carboxymethyl hydroxyethylcellulose.
29. (Currently amended.) The ~~cellulosic polymer suspension method~~ of Claim 7 19, wherein the suspension further comprising comprises a suspension stabilizer.
30. (Currently amended.) A method ~~for thickening brine during the recovery of oil and/or gas from~~ of alleviating the loss of fluid to a subterranean formation during a workover or completion operation which comprises pumping a thickened introducing to the brine to the location where the workover or completion operation is being conducted, the be thickened brine comprising a suspension ~~comprising~~ of a cellulosic polymer suspended in an aqueous alkali formate solution.
31. (Previously presented.) The method of Claim 30, wherein the amount of alkali formate in the suspension is greater than 40 weight percent.
32. (Previously presented.) The method of Claim 30, wherein the amount of alkali formate in the suspension is between from about 40 to about 75 weight percent.
33. (Currently amended.) The method of Claim 30, wherein the brine thickened with the suspension has a density greater than or equal to 11.6 ppg at 70°F.
34. (Currently amended.) The method of Claim 33, wherein the brine thickened with the suspension has a density between from 11.6 to 14.2 ppg.
35. (Previously presented.) The method of Claim 30, wherein the cellulosic polymer is selected from the group consisting of anionic and nonionic modified cellulose.

36. (Previously presented.) The method of Claim 35, wherein the anionic or nonionic modified cellulose is selected from the group consisting of hydroxyethylcellulose and carboxymethyl hydroxyethylcellulose.

37. (Cancelled.)

38. (Currently amended.) The method of Claim 19, wherein the brine ~~to be thickened~~ is selected from the group consisting of brines of calcium chloride, calcium bromide, zinc bromide and mixtures thereof.

39. (Currently amended.) The method of Claim 30, wherein the brine ~~to be thickened~~ is selected from the group consisting of brines of calcium chloride, calcium bromide, zinc bromide and mixtures thereof.

40. (Currently amended.) ~~A cellulosic polymer suspension consisting essentially of a cellulosic polymer suspended in an aqueous salt solution, wherein the aqueous salt solution contains 40 weight percent or more of an alkali formate selected from the group consisting of potassium formate, cesium formate and mixtures thereof and further~~ The method of Claim 30, wherein the amount of cellulosic polymer in the suspension is between from about 10 to about 23 weight percent.

41. (New.) In a method of performing a completion or workover operation in a subterranean formation wherein brine is thickened in order to alleviate fluid loss into the formation, the improvement comprising thickening the brine with a cellulosic suspension comprising a cellulosic polymer suspended in an aqueous alkali formate solution.

42. (New.) The method of Claim 41, wherein the amount of alkali formate in the suspension is greater than 40 weight percent.

43. (New.) The method of Claim 41, wherein the amount of alkali formate in the suspension is between from about 40 to about 75 weight percent.

44. (New.) The method of Claim 41, wherein the brine thickened with the suspension has a density greater than or equal to 11.6 ppg at 70°F.

45. (New.) The method of Claim 44, wherein the brine thickened with the suspension has a density between from 11.6 to 14.2 ppg.

46. (New.) The method of Claim 41, wherein the cellulosic polymer is selected from the group consisting of anionic and nonionic modified cellulose.

47. (New.) The method of Claim 41, wherein the brine thickened with the suspension is selected from the group consisting of brines of calcium chloride, calcium bromide, zinc bromide and mixtures thereof.

48. (New.) A method of using a thickened brine in the completion or workover of an oil or gas well which comprises introducing into the oil or gas well a cellulosic polymer suspension of a cellulosic polymer in an aqueous alkali salt solution, the aqueous salt solution containing 40 weight percent or more of alkali formate and further wherein no more than 25 weight percent of the alkali formate is sodium formate, the remainder being potassium formate, cesium formate or a mixture thereof.

49. (New.) The method of Claim 48, wherein the brine thickened with the suspension has a density greater than or equal to 11.6 ppg at 70°F.

50. (New.) The method of Claim 49, wherein the brine thickened with the suspension has a density between from 11.6 to 14.2 ppg.

51. (New.) The method of Claim 48, wherein the cellulosic polymer is selected from the group consisting of hydroxyethylcellulose and carboxymethyl hydroxyethylcellulose.

52. (New.) The method of Claim 48, wherein the brine thickened with the suspension is selected from the group consisting of brines of calcium chloride, calcium bromide, zinc bromide and mixtures thereof.

53. (New.) In a displacement operation of an oil or gas well using a thickened brine as a spacer fluid, the improvement comprising using as the spacer fluid a brine thickened with a cellulosic polymer suspension of a cellulosic polymer in an aqueous alkali salt solution, the aqueous salt solution containing 40 weight percent or more of alkali formate and further wherein no more than 25 weight percent of the alkali formate is sodium formate, the remainder being potassium formate, cesium formate or a mixture thereof.

54. (New.) The method of Claim 53, wherein the brine thickened with the suspension has a density greater than or equal to 11.6 ppg at 70°F.

55. (New.) The method of Claim 54, wherein the brine thickened with the suspension has a density between from 11.6 to 14.2 ppg.

56. (New.) The method of Claim 53, wherein the brine thickened with the suspension is selected from the group consisting of brines of calcium chloride, calcium bromide, zinc bromide and mixtures thereof.